

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 1512

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, WB, GW

SUBJ: NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE IN BERLIN HOUSE OF REPS

REF: USBERLIN 1470

1. SUMMARY: LIVELIEST DEBATE IN RECENT YEARS MARKED JULY 21 SESSION OF BERLIN HOUSE OF REPS ON CDU MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE DIRECTED AGAINST SPD/FDP COALITION SENAT LED BY GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ. BOTH SCHUETZ AND CDU CHAIRMAN LORENZ MADE EXCELLENT PRESENTATIONS. ACTUAL VOTE ON NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION TAKES PLACE ON JULY 23, BUT THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE VOTE COULD GO AGAINST SDP/FDP. ELECTION OF SENATOR LUEDER (FDP) TO POSITION OF MAYOR, HOWEVER, COULD BE CLOSE. SHOULD LUEDER FAIL TO BE ELECTED, COALITION WOULD COLLAPSE AND NEW ELECTIONS COULD RESULT. END SUMMARY.

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2. AT A SPECIAL SESSION OF BERLIN HOUSE OF REPRESENTA-

TIVES ON JULY 21, CDU MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN BERLIN SENAT WAS DEBATED IN LIVELY AND AT TIMES PASSIONATE FASHION. IT WAS MOST SPIRITED DEBATE IN BERLIN'S PARLIAMENT IN RECENT YEARS. ALTHOUGH PRIMARILY INSPIRED BY ESCAPE OF FOUR WOMEN TERRORISTS FROM PRISON ON

JULY 7, CDU CHARGES CONCENTRATED ON "MISTAKES" OF SPD/FDP COALITION SENAT OVER PAST YEAR. PRISON ESCAPE WAS ONLY LARGE LINK IN CHAIN OF "SCANDALS". GOVMAYOR SCHUETZ, WHO DOES WELL IN BACK-TO-THE-WALL DEBATE, DEFENDED HIS PERFORMANCE AND THAT OF SENAT. HE AND OTHER SPD/FDP SPEAKERS NOTED THAT POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF PRISON ESCAPE AND HAD BEEN ACCEPTED AS EVIDENCED BY RESIGNATION OF SENATOR OXFORT (WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN DEBATE).

3. AS WAS NOTED BY SCHUETZ, CDU MOTION WAS PROPOSED BY SECOND-STRING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS DURING ABSENCE OF THEIR BERLIN LEADERS IN U.S. CHAIRMAN LORENZ, DESPITE FACT THAT HE THOUGH TIMING OF HIS PARTY'S MOTION WAS BAD (HE TOLD MISOFF ON JULY 16 THAT HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED WAITING UNTIL OFFICIAL REPORT ON PRISON ESCAPE WAS FINISHED BEFORE TAKING ANY POLITICAL ACTION), NEVERTHELESS GAVE EXCELLENT ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF IN RECOUNTING CDU'S VIEWS OF SENAT INADEQUACIES. COMMENT: IT IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED THAT ACTING CDU CHAIRMAN SCHMITZ CALLED FOR MOTION ON URGING OF YOUNG RIGHT-WING CDU MEMBERS DIEPGEN AND LANDOWSKY. CHAIRMAN LORENZ AND CAUCUS CHAIRMAN LUMMER WERE PRESENTED WITH A FAIT ACCOMPLI WHEN THEY ARRIVED BACK IN BERLIN ON JULY 14. END COMMENT.

4. SURPRISINGLY, SEVENTEEN MEMBERS OF HOUSE WERE NOT PRESENT FOR DEBATE ON JULY 21. HOWEVER, ALL BUT THREE CDU AND TWO SPD MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ON HAND FOR VOTE ON JULY 23. WHILE THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE WILL FAIL BY SEVERAL VOTES, THERE IS SOME CONCERN IN SPD CIRCLES THAT THE VOTE FOR LUEDER AS MAYOR WILL BE VERY CLOSE. (LUEDER WAS ONLY ELECTED SENATOR FOR ECONOMICS IN APRIL 1975 BY ONE VOTE
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MAJORITY.) FDP ANNOUNCED ON JULY 20 THAT IF LUEDER IS NOT ELECTED, PARTY WILL WITHDRAW FROM COALITION. MISOFF WAS TOLD ON JULY 16 THAT SOME SPD MEMBERS (AMONG THEM FORMER SENATOR LIEHR), MIGHT VOTE WITH PARTY ON NO-CONFIDENCE MEASURE BUT SHOW DISGRUNTLEMENT WITH SCHUETZ AND DISLIKE FOR FDP BY VOTING AGAINST LUEDER.

5. CHANCELLERY CHIEF HERZ TOLD MISOFF THAT AT SPD

CAUCUS MEETING ON JULY 21, SCHUETZ QUIETLY BUT FIRMLY EXPLAINED TO HIS FELLOW SOCIALISTS THAT POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF REJECTION OF LUEDER WOULD BE LOSS OF POWER BY SPD WITH ALL THAT THIS WOULD ENTAIL. ALTHOUGH SOME SPD OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT NEED FOR PARTY TO GO INTO OPPOSITION TO REJUVENATE ITSELF, WHEN SPD PARLIAMENTARIANS VOTE ON JULY 23, THEY ARE LIKELY TO GO ALONG WITH SCHUETZ. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT SOME B-(-BENCHERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO KNOW THEY WILL NOT BE RENOMINATED BY THE PARTY FOR THE NEXT BERLIN ELECTIONS, MIGHT ABSTAIN OR VOTE AGAINST LUEDER. ALL THREE VOTES TO BE TAKEN ON JULY 23--NO-CONFIDENCE, LUEDER FOR MAYOR AND BAUMANN FOR SENATOR FOR JUSTICE-- WILL BE SECRET BALLOTS. THE SPECTOR OF LOWER SAXONY WILL BE PRESENT IN BERLIN ON JULY 23 FOR IT ONLY A HANDFUL OF SOCIALISTS DENY FDP'S LUEDER THEIR VOTES, CONSEQUENCES COULD MEAN NEW ELECTIONS FOR BERLIN. EFFECT THIS MIGHT HAVE ON FEDERAL ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER IS OPEN TO SPECULATION.GEORGE

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